



# MARK GOTTLIEB

Speaker Pro Tempore  
Wisconsin State Assembly

**Testimony of Representative Mark Gottlieb  
Senate Bill 291  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Higher Education  
November 14, 2007**

Chairwoman Vinehout and Members:

Thank you for holding this public hearing on Senate Bill 291, relating to the University of Wisconsin System tuition gift certificate program.

Last session, I authored legislation that was signed into law as 2005 WI Act 77, authorizing the UW System to implement a program of gift certificates for the payment of tuition at UW System campuses or to pay for a study-abroad program. Under the bill, a gift certificate may be transferred to the parent, child, spouse or sibling of the individual named on the gift certificate and a gift certificate does not expire.

At the request of UW System administrators, I am introducing trailer legislation, along with Senator Vinehout, because some problems were identified in implementing the tuition gift program and SB 291 will make the necessary corrections to get the program up and running.

The UW System is not reasonably capable of administering the gift tuition program and therefore has found a vendor that can do it much more efficiently. Because students will be issued paper checks created by a third-party vendor that are payable to the UW, not the recipient, and can be used at any UW institution for tuition payment, it negates the issue of transferability. The purchaser is essentially buying a pre-paid check made out to the UW System and the purchaser/recipient is responsible for it until it's presented for payment. This bill repeals the transferability provision in WI Act 77.

WI Act 77 also directed monies that came in from the tuition gift certificate program to the UW System tuition appropriation account. The UW discovered this was problematic because study abroad is a cost recovery program that is accounted for in the UW System auxiliary operations appropriation account. The current language in the UW System's appropriations will direct the UW on how to account for the money received from the sale of gift certificates; therefore this bill repeals the language in WI Act 77 that directed the money specifically to the tuition appropriation account.

These two changes requested by the UW System will allow them to properly implement the gift certificate program so students can receive and utilize these gift certificates for tuition and study-abroad payments.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

**STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 60<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT**